

**REMARKS**

Claims 1-15, 17-25, 27, 28 and 30-35 are pending in this application.

By this Amendment, claims 1, 15 and 28 are amended to recite additional features disclosed in the specification at, for example, Figs. 2C and 8.

Reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested.

Applicant thanks Examiners Shah and Martin for the courtesy extended to Applicant's representative, Mr. Luo, during the October 5, 2006 personal interview. The substance of the personal interview is incorporated in the following remarks.

The Examiner is respectfully requested to acknowledge consideration of the references listed, and to return an initialed copy of the Form PTO-1449 submitted with the August 23, 2004 Information Disclosure statement.

The Office Action rejects claims 1-7 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over U.S. Patent Publication No. 2002/0001009 to Gasvoda et al. (Gasvoda). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

The Office Action asserts that the term "first direction" needs to be further defined. In response, claim 1 is further amended to clarify that the first direction is from one of the two opposite ends, where the fixing portion is fixed, toward the other of the two opposite ends. As amended, claim 1 recites that the extending portion has a cross section area which gradually decreases in this first direction at least from a point on the length until the end of the extending portion.

As discussed during the personal interview, Gasvoda does not disclose or suggest the features added to claim 1. Thus, Gasvoda does not disclose each and every element recited in claim 1, and claims 2-7 depending therefrom. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1-7 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) is respectfully requested.

The Office Action rejects claims 15 and 17-25 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)<sup>1</sup> over JP 06039161 to Kawasato et al. (Kawasato) in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,568,954 to Rosback and U.S. Patent No. 6,280,024 to Miyazawa et al. (Miyazawa); and rejects claims 28, 31-33 and 35 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)<sup>2</sup> over JP 60131248 to Kawashima in view of Rosback and Miyazawa. These rejections are respectfully traversed.

The Office Action recognizes that none of Kawasato and Kawashima discloses or suggests a pair of electrodes held both at a first end, extending towards a second end opposite the first end, one of the pair of electrodes does not protrude into an interior space of the ink bag, or wherein the ink delivering portion includes a passage within which the other of the pair of electrodes is located so as not to protrude into the interior space of the ink bag. However, the Office Action asserts that Rosback and Miyazawa supply these features.

Claims 15 and 28 are amended to recite "wherein the passage and the hollow insulating member are separate elements that are both held at the first end of ink bag and extend in the direction toward the second end; and wherein the one of said pair of electrodes is not within the passage, and the other of said pair of electrodes is not within the hollow insulating member." These additional features clarify the subject matter recited in claims 15 and 28, and lacking in Kawasato and Kawashima. Rosback and Miyazawa do not disclose or suggest these additional features, thus do not supply the subject matter lacking in Kawasato and Kawashima.

In particular, Rosback discloses a probe supporting structure 174 that is shared by both probe tips 188 and 190. See Fig. 3, col. 7, line 58 - col. 8, line 27. Thus, Rosback does not disclose or suggest an ink delivering portion and a hollow insulating member that are separate

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<sup>1</sup> The Office Action indicates that this rejection is under 35 U.S.C. §102(b). However, Applicant believes that this rejection is actually made under 35 U.S.C. §103(a).

<sup>2</sup> This rejection is also assumed to be made under 35 U.S.C. §103(a).

elements and that are separately used by the two probe tips 188 and 190. As discussed during the personal interview, Rosback does not disclose or suggest "wherein the passage and the hollow insulating member are separate elements that are both held at the first end of ink bag and extend in the direction toward the second end; and wherein the one of said pair of electrodes is not within the passage, and the other of said pair of electrodes is not within the hollow insulating member," as recited in claims 15 and 28. Therefore, Rosback do does not supply the subject matter lacking in Kawasato and Kawashima.

Also, Miyazawa does not supply the subject matter lacking in Kawasato and Kawashima. The Office Action asserts that Miyazawa discloses that one of a pair of electrodes is located so as not to protrude into an anterior space of an ink bag. In this regard, the Office Action asserts that element 34 in Fig. 2 of Miyazawa corresponds to an ink bag. However, element 34 in Fig. 2 of Miyazawa is a mesh filter. See col. 6, line 5. Miyazawa does not disclose element 34 as an ink bag. Also, one of ordinary skill in the art would not have been motivated to combine Miyazawa's mesh filter into Kawasato and Kawashima as an ink bag.

For at least the above reasons, Kawasato, Kawashima, Rosback and Miyazawa, either individually or in combination, do not disclose or suggest the subject matter recited in claims 15 and 28, and claims 17-25, 31-33 and 35 depending therefrom. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection of claims 15, 17-25, 28, 31-33 and 35 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) is respectfully requested.

The Office Action rejects claim 8 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Gasvoda in view of Kawasato; rejects claims 9-12 and 14 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Gasvoda in view of Kawashima; rejects claim 13 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Gasvoda and Kawashima in view of Kawasato; rejects claim 27 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Kawasato in view of Rosback,

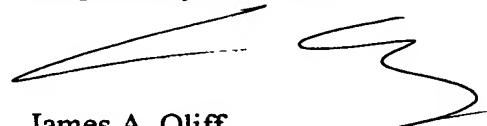
Miyazawa and Gasvoda; and rejects claims 30 and 34 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Kawashima in view of Rosback, Miyazawa and Kawasato. These rejections are respectfully traversed.

As discussed during the April 18, 2006 personal interview, Gasvoda, Kawasato and Kawashima do not supply the subject matter indicated above as lacking in each other. Therefore, Gasvoda, Kawasato, Kawashima, Rosback and Miyazawa, either individually or in combination, do not disclose or suggest the subject matter recited in claims 1, 15 and 28, and claims 8-14, 27, 30 and 34 depending therefrom. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection of claims 8-14, 27, 30 and 34 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1-15, 17-25, 27, 28 and 30-35 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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Attachment:  
Request for Continued Examination

Date: October 11, 2006

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